

Healthy Neighbourhoods Paper - Housing and Planning as Building Blocks for a Good Life in Northumberland

Health and Well-being Board

Thursday, 11th January 2024

Appendix 1 – Resident Views on Housing and Community

Community views on Housing and Community gathered as a part of Place Standard Tool community conversations:

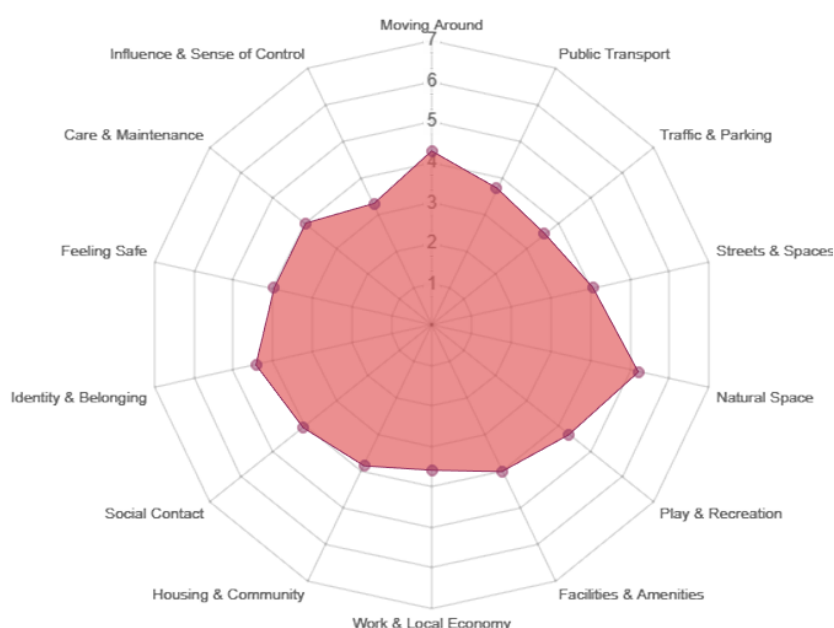


Figure 4 Place Standard Tool responses - stakeholders across 12 localities, summer 2022.

A summary of the residents' views in the Hirst, Bedlington and Cramlington on housing and community is shown below.

Hirst (2022)

- Availability of good quality, affordable social housing or Local Authority owned housing is inadequate.
- People feel that private sector renting is an expensive option. People say that it is difficult to move on from this sector.
- Residents feel they are excluded from the property market by the speed and ease of purchasing by 'serial' landlords.
- Some people are concerned about the increasing change of use of single residence properties into Houses of Multiple Occupancy

- Some living in owner occupied properties feel that the ceiling value of their home means they are unable to move to a comparable property in another area or elsewhere in Ashington.
- People feel that new housing developments in Ashington do not offer opportunities to Hirst residents.
- The levels of social housing within developments and the cost of new houses built means people consider them to be out of their reach.
- People feel existing housing stock in Hirst does not meet the diversity of community needs.
- People consider the rental housing stock (social and private sector) to be typically low quality.
- Some feel houses could be more energy efficient and are concerned about increasing heating costs.

Bedlington (2022)

- Many people feel housing and the sense of community in Bedlington is good or very good.
- The housing offer is considered varied, and homes are generally thought to be well maintained by residents and housing associations.
- Some feel there is a good variety of good standard housing that offers opportunities for storage and is energy efficient.
- Others feel their houses could be more energy efficient and offer increased opportunities for cycle storage, electric car charging and recycling.
- People feel that housing development in and around Bedlington has grown substantially and there are concerns that population growth has outgrown the local infrastructure.
- People are concerned green spaces are being lost to housing development.
- People feel local house prices can be high and that there should be more affordable housing.
- Private rental stock can be poorly maintained.
- Low priced and leasehold properties available in Bedlington can be problematic to purchase.
- People feel there is limited availability of bungalows or retirement flats.
- A small minority of people feel more housing in Bedlington would be a positive improvement.

Cramlington (2023)

What is good now?

People appreciate the variety and choice of housing stock across the town. They also enjoy the community spirit and community groups that allow for volunteering and participation. Some council tenants feel that their properties are well maintained. People do not feel that homelessness is an area for concern in Cramlington.

How could we make it better in future?

Potential improvements suggested included the provision of more affordable and social housing, particularly for young people. Many people also felt that there should be no further housing development in Cramlington to prevent continued loss of green space and overstretching of amenities and social infrastructure. Young people feel that housing is overly expensive and unattractive. Some council tenants feel that their homes are not well looked after. Some Beacon Hill residents feel that their homes are 'sub-standard'. Older people feel that there is a lack of affordable bungalows which prevents downsizing.